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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1127  
INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ATHENS 001655

SIPDIS  
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PASS TO AMCONSUL ADANA  
AMEMBASSY ASTANA PASS TO AMCONSUL ALMATY  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL LEIPZIG  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PASS TO AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG  
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [OSCE](#) [KPIR](#) [GR](#) [MK](#) [TU](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR AND DROUTSAS DISCUSS MACEDONIA, IRAN, TURKEY,  
MORE

REF: STATE 120288

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CLASSIFIED BY: Daniel V. Speckhard, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. Ambassador Speckhard called on Alternate FM Droutsas November 23 for a tour d' horizon prior to the December 1-2 Athens OSCE Ministerial, focusing on Macedonia, Iran, and Turkey. The Ambassador urged Droutsas to stay engaged and push for a solution to the Macedonia name issue in light of the December EU Council meeting. Droutsas was upset at UN negotiator Nimetz' handling of his recent meeting with Greek Macedonia name negotiator Vassilakis that led to press leaks by the Macedonians, but underscored the Greek commitment to negotiations. The Ambassador raised U.S. concerns with Iran, and Droutsas offered that PM Papandreou's position as Socialist International president could serve as an additional channel of communication. On Turkey, Droutsas took a positive approach, and noted a reply from PM Papandreou to PM Erdogan's note earlier in the month is forthcoming. Droutsas also stated that as OSCE Chairman, Greece would not stand in the way of Kazakhstan's desire to host a Summit during its upcoming tenure as CiO. On Cyprus, he said the EU acqui communitaire should be used more in the negotiations as a reference point for solutions, which favor neither one side nor the other. Ambassador Speckhard also urged Droutsas to take a positive step in the counter-piracy framework by adding Greece's signature to the New York Declaration, and to continue pushing the MFA to grant the necessary permission that will allow construction of a \$32 million fuel pipeline at the U.S. naval facility at Souda Bay. END SUMMARY.

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Macedonia  
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12. (C) Following up on the disappointing results of the recent Nimetz-Vassilakis meeting, the Ambassador asked Droutsas for an update on Greek efforts to work on a solution for the name issue with Skopje. The Ambassador urged him to stay engaged and push

forward for a resolution on the name issue and pay particular attention to managing the upcoming EU Council meeting in a way that contributed to a successful outcome. Alternate FM Droutsas relayed that he was upset with the way Nimetz had handled the meeting with Vassilakis and the way Skopje had played to the public the results of the Nimetz meetings. Greece had reluctantly sent Vassilakis to New York, having been summoned by Nimetz without talking to Athens first. Droutsas informed the Ambassador that Vassilakis had told Nimetz to deliver the strategic message that Papandreou and he had been saying since the October 4 elections: Greece was committed to working to find a mutually satisfactory and lasting solution to the name dispute. When the Ambassador noted that the reports of the meeting had left the exact opposite impression, Droutsas blamed Nimetz, stating that Nimetz had pushed for details and as a result was given the long-standing existing official position. The way Nimetz then shared this with the Macedonians only made matters worse, with Macedonian leaks to the press compounding problems in Skopje and Athens. Droutsas was visibly upset with the way the first interaction on these negotiations was handled and felt it was undermining rather than contributing to their success.

13. (C) Droutsas was careful to reiterate the Greek commitment to the U.N. framework for negotiations and said that they were not opening an alternative with the Kappo-Proteger consultations. He reiterated the Prime Minister's approach of building more positive relations between the two countries. He foreshadowed to the Ambassador a forthcoming announcement, as part of their broader effort to change the dynamic with Skopje, that Papandreou was inviting the leaders of Albania and Macedonia to a Summit on environmental issues in the Prespa region in northwestern Greece where the three nations' borders come together.

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Iran

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14. (C) The Ambassador raised Iran points in reftel, stressing the USG's desire to consult on next steps, given Iran's unwillingness to work with the international community, particularly Iran's disappointing follow-up to its commitments with the P5+1 in Geneva on October 1. Droutsas was non-committal, but agreed that the news is not good. He also noted that Greece has had a long relationship with Iran and the Prime Minister himself has channels of communications due to his position as president of the Socialist International. As in the past, he urged the U.S. to consider using the PM as an effective interlocutor in advancing the international community's objectives on sensitive issues.

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Turkey

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15. (C) On Turkey, Droutsas reviewed recent overtures by the Prime Minister. He said that Erdogan, whom the PM knows well, appears to be in agreement to refresh the relationship, and that Papandreou would be responding soon to the Erdogan's letter. In Droutsas' view, this process had to proceed in a step-by-step manner. Droutsas said the regular, high-level, close-hold bilateral consultations would continue, though perhaps with greater impetus. Ambassador Speckhard raised the need for confidence building measures in the Aegean, pointing to the informal discussions between Alternate MOD Beglitis and Assistant Secretary of Defense on the margins of the November 16 High Level Consultative Committee

on a possible role for NATO in creating "rules of the road" for all of NATO's airspace that would be equally applicable to the Aegean. Droutsas reiterated that the Prime Minister would be moving forward on Turkey in continuance of what had been started when Papandreou was Foreign Minister in the last PASOK government (1999-2004), that both sides know each other very well, and that the GOG feels that things are moving in the right direction.

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OSCE

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16. (C) Turning briefly to the OSCE in light of the upcoming Athens Ministerial December 1-2, Droutsas said that Greece's main objective was to embody the Corfu process so that the necessary work would continue. He said it remained to be seen whether there would be a political declaration at the conclusion of the Ministerial, and that Greece would not stand in the way of Kazakhstan's desire for an OSCE Summit during its upcoming tenure as Chairman-in-Office, but that consensus of all members was necessary for this idea to move forward.

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Cyprus

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17. (C) Droutsas told the Ambassador that the key was for both sides to be free to negotiate and not have positions dictated by others on the outside. In his personal opinion, the negotiations could be aided by using more effectively the EU's acquis communautaire. The EU acquis should not be seen as favoring one community, but rather the principles on which the EU is based and on which a united Cyprus must abide by. Solutions to many of the issues being discussed could be found if this were used as the basis of agreement.

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Counter-piracy

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18. (C) Following up on the conversation started during PM A/S Shapiro's October visit, the Ambassador handed Droutsas a copy of the New York Declaration on best practices for merchant vessel self protection, and urged Greece to join the U.S. and others as a signee at the upcoming meeting of the Contact Group in January. The Ambassador noted that the shippers with whom we had met with here and in Washington seem now to understand that there is no obligatory requirement to use armed guards and that the statement is declaratory, not an international legally binding agreement. Droutsas said he would take the request on board.

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Souda Bay Fuel Pipeline

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19. (C) The Ambassador asked if the Greek government was still on track for giving the U.S. the go-ahead soon to proceed with the construction of a new fuel pipeline and fuel storage tanks for the U.S. Naval Support Activity at Souda Bay, Crete. (Comment: Greek interlocutors had assured ASD Vershbow on November 16 that the permission could be granted before the end of 2009.) Droutsas did not seem familiar with the issue. North America Officer Director Chrisoula Alyferi reassured the Ambassador, however, and stated they hoped to share a proposal very soon. The Ambassador emphasized that the Alternate Minister of Defense and Assistant Secretary Vershbow agreed to work to resolve all outstanding issues by the end of this year.  
Speckhard